

Appl. No. 10/707,505  
Response dated October 27, 2006  
Reply to Office Action dated August 24, 2006

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**Amendments to the Claims**

1. (currently amended) A sidewall coring tool, comprising:
  - a tool body;
  - a hollow coring shaft extendable from the tool body;
  - a formation cutter disposed at a distal end of the hollow coring shaft; and
  - an elastic retention member segmented into a plurality of petals and disposed in the hollow coring shaft, wherein in a first position the elastic retention member bends to receive a core and in a second position the elastic retention member defines a substantially planar contiguous surface across the hollow coring shaft to capture the core in the hollow coring shaft  
the petals are oriented relative to each other to minimize an aperture near a center of the retention member.
2. (original) The sidewall coring tool of claim 1, further comprising an internal sleeve disposed inside the hollow coring shaft, and wherein the retention member is connected to the internal sleeve.
3. (original) The sidewall coring tool of claim 2, wherein the retention member is disposed proximate a distal end of the internal sleeve.
4. (original) The sidewall coring tool of claim 2, wherein the internal sleeve comprises a non-rotating sleeve.
5. (original) The sidewall coring tool of claim 2, wherein the internal sleeve comprises a radial notch such that the petals of the retention member can be positioned radially outward into the notch.
6. (original) The sidewall coring tool of claim 5, wherein the retention member has a petal circumference that is substantially the same as an inner diameter of the internal sleeve.

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7-10. (canceled)

11. (previously presented) The sidewall coring tool of claim 1, wherein an inner diameter of an internal sleeve is substantially the same as an inner diameter of the formation cutter.

12. (previously presented) The sidewall coring tool of claim 1, wherein an inner diameter of an internal sleeve is larger than an inner diameter of the formation cutter.

13. (canceled)

14. (original) The sidewall coring tool of claim 1, wherein the plurality of petals comprises 3 petals.

15. (original) The sidewall coring tool of claim 1, wherein the plurality of petals overlap.

16. (currently amended) The sidewall coring tool of claim 1, wherein the plurality of petals are separated by slits-gaps.

17. (original) The sidewall coring tool of claim 1, wherein the retention member comprises perforations.

18. (original) The sidewall coring tool of claim 17, wherein the perforations are circumferential perforations disposed outside a petal circumference.

19. (original) The sidewall coring tool of claim 17, wherein the perforations are radial perforations disposed at least partially inside a petal circumference.

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20. (original) The sidewall coring tool of claim 1, wherein the plurality of petals are adjacent.

21. (original) The sidewall coring tool of claim 1, wherein the retention member is constructed of rubber.

22. (original) The sidewall coring tool of claim 1, wherein the retention member is rounded and extrudes towards a distal end of hollow coring shaft.

23. (original) The sidewall coring tool of claim 1, wherein the retention member is rounded and extrudes towards a proximal end of the hollow coring shaft.

24. (currently amended) A method for taking a core sample, comprising:  
extending a coring bit into a formation, the coring bit having an elastic retention member segmented into a plurality of petals, ~~wherein the petals are oriented relative to each other to minimize an aperture near a center of the retention member;~~  
forming a substantially contiguous surface across the coring bit with the plurality of petals prior to receiving the core sample;  
receiving the core sample in the coring bit; and  
forming a substantially planar contiguous surface across the coring bit with the plurality of petals after receiving the core sample; and  
retaining the core sample in the coring bit with the retention member while withdrawing the coring bit from the formation.

25. (canceled)

26. (original) The method of claim 24, wherein the retention member is connected to an internal sleeve disposed in the coring bit and the core sample is received in the internal sleeve.

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27-34. (canceled)

35. (currently amended) A sidewall coring tool, comprising:  
a tool body;  
a hollow coring shaft extendable from the tool body;  
a formation cutter disposed at a distal end of the hollow coring shaft; and  
an elastic retention member segmented into a plurality of petals and disposed in the hollow coring shaft, wherein the plurality of petals form a substantially contiguous planar surface across the hollow coring shaft.

36. (previously presented) The sidewall coring tool of claim 35, wherein each of the petals includes at least one edge that at least partially defines the petal.

37. (previously presented) The sidewall coring tool of claim 36, wherein the at least one edge of a first of the plurality of petals abuts the at least one edge of a second of the plurality of petals.

38. (previously presented) The sidewall coring tool of claim 35, further comprising an internal sleeve disposed inside the hollow coring shaft, and wherein the retention member is connected to the internal sleeve.

39. (previously presented) The sidewall coring tool of claim 38, wherein the retention member is disposed proximate a distal end of the internal sleeve.

40. (previously presented) The sidewall coring tool of claim 38, wherein the internal sleeve comprises a non-rotating sleeve.

41. (previously presented) The sidewall coring tool of claim 38, wherein the internal sleeve comprises a radial notch such that the petals of the retention member can be positioned

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radially outward into the notch.